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K 2019: Plastics industry converts to circular economy

- **Manufacturers of plastics and rubber machinery supply technologies for converting to circular economy**
- **Holistic thinking and acting develops plastic waste as valuable resource**
- **Export stop for old plastics in countries with lower environmental standards than in Europe**
- **VDMA Circular Economy Forum at the K 2019 as info point**

Düsseldorf, 15 October 2019– The trade fair presence of the VDMA plastics and rubber machinery at K 2019 is characterised by the circular economy. The VDMA and its members fully support the concept, and they make that clear with their presence at K 2019. They demonstrate that they accept responsibility for solving the problems which arise by throwing away plastic waste. „Plastic is a valuable material, but it must be correctly disposed of in accordance with the circular economy and re-used,“ is how Ulrich Reifenhäuser, chairman of the professional association explains it. „Makers of plastics and rubber machines consider themselves important partners of the circular economy in the plastics industry. We supply the necessary technologies for its implementation. This applies to all processing stages, to product manufacture just as much as processing of the waste and regranulation. We are convinced that the circular economy can succeed only when all partners of the cycle cooperate to push forward technological development and transfer of know-how“, as Reifenhäuser emphasises it.

Holistic thinking and practice is necessary

Holistic thinking for the entire plastics industry is necessary for this. Apart from economic use of the material already at the production stage, after the use phase, plastic waste must be treated as an important resource. The primary aim is to promote this process and help generate good disposal models. This is where there are also good chances for new business models. Shortcomings in disposal methods can be rectified only in global application. Good examples for waste sorting systems and plastic recycling must be given worldwide. Here too, machinery manufacturers, as worldwide actors can make an important contribution.

Demands to the politicians

A further important condition for the success of the circular economy are creation of planning security with legitimate framework conditions for the companies – plastics processors, recyclers und also the large brand manufacturers. European politics is an important player in the overall concept. The following belongs to the political agenda:

- VDMA supports the definition in the EU plastics strategy, to set a target total of 10 million tonnes of recyclate in new products by 2025. For this, there must be adapted regulations for the various customer industries. For example, a quota for packaging can be the right incentive.
- VDMA promotes a stop on exports of plastic waste to countries outside the EU which have lower environmental standards than Europe.
- VDMA advocates not allowing national solo efforts in regulating the circular economy; on the contrary, only a European solution makes sense.

VDMA Circular Economy Forum at the K 2019

VDMA plastics and rubber machinery, together with member companies of the steering committee Marketing, has developed the concept for the association's presence at the „K“, which is based on three pillars: promote explanation – display – dialogue! Over 20 exhibitors – member companies, but also brand producers and partners such as Procter & Gamble, SSI Schäfer and Dekura – explain in the VDMA pavilion the most important stages of the circular economy, using examples of good practice. The daily exhibition programme offers exhibition visitors the opportunity to meet with experts from machine engineering, processors, societies and politics, to experience new ideas and technologies in the many talks and presentations as well as hearing opinions of people who are not involved directly with the plastics industry.

Many VDMA member companies show on their booths at K 2019, which technologies, but also material innovations they have on hand for recycling of plastics; they are represented with a short profile in the VDMA online exhibition flyer.

For more information about the K and the program go to plastics.vdma.org

C I R C U L A R E C O N O M Y @ K

P l a s t i c s s h a p e t h e F u t u r e

Have you any more questions? Ina Vettkötter, VDMA Plastics and Rubber Machines,
Telephone 069 6603 1844, ina.vettkoetter@vdma.org, she would be happy to reply.

More than 230 companies are members of the professional association; they cover over 90% of the industry's production in Germany. Ten percent of our membership companies are from Austria, Switzerland and France. The German member companies represent a turnover of 7 billion EUR in the core machine manufacture, including peripheral technology. Every fourth plastic processing machine manufactured worldwide comes in terms of value from Germany; the export quota is around 70 percent. Chairman of the professional society is Ulrich Reifenhäuser, Managing Director and shareholder of Reifenhäuser GmbH & Co KG.